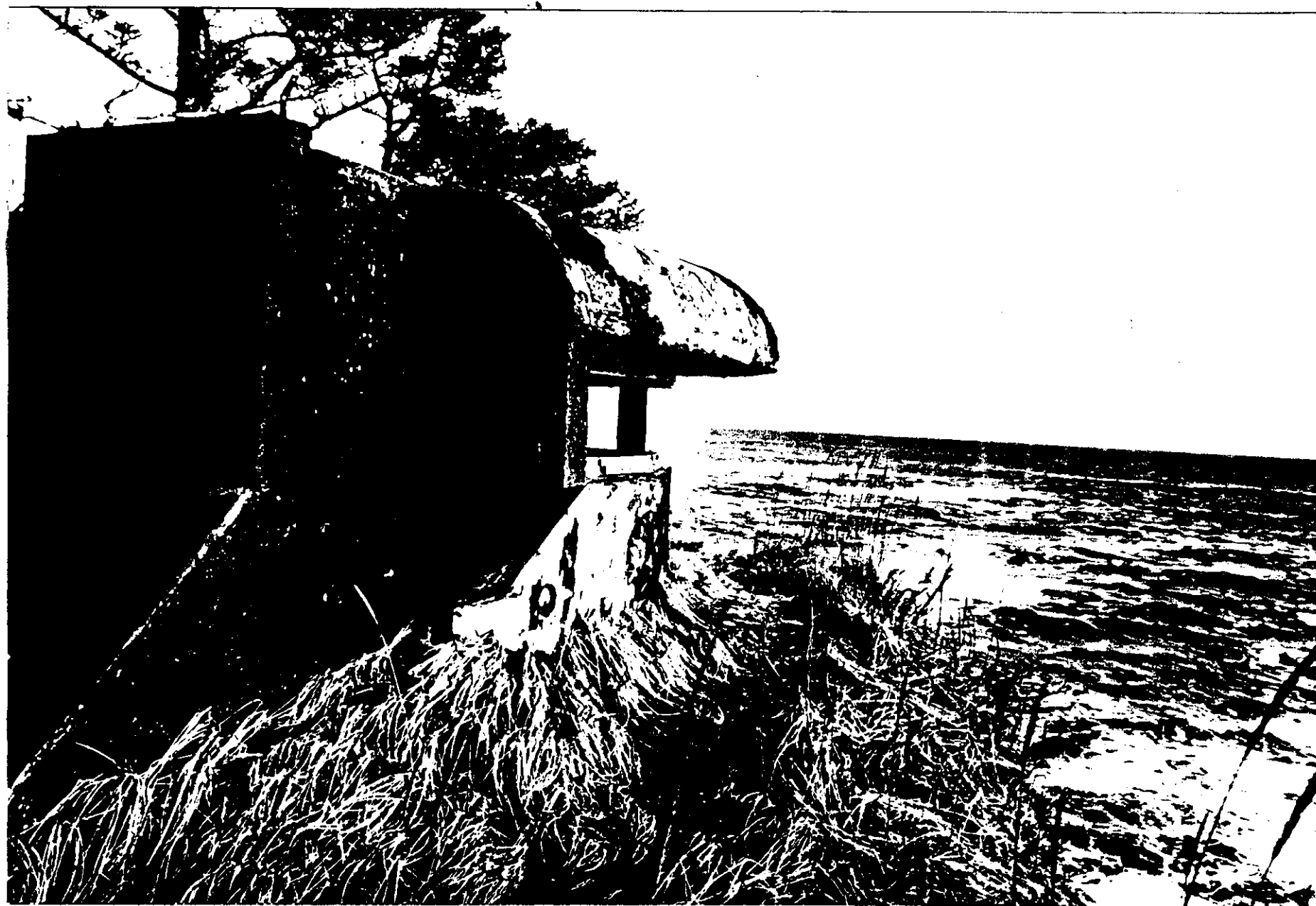


Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park Management Plan



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Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park Management Plan

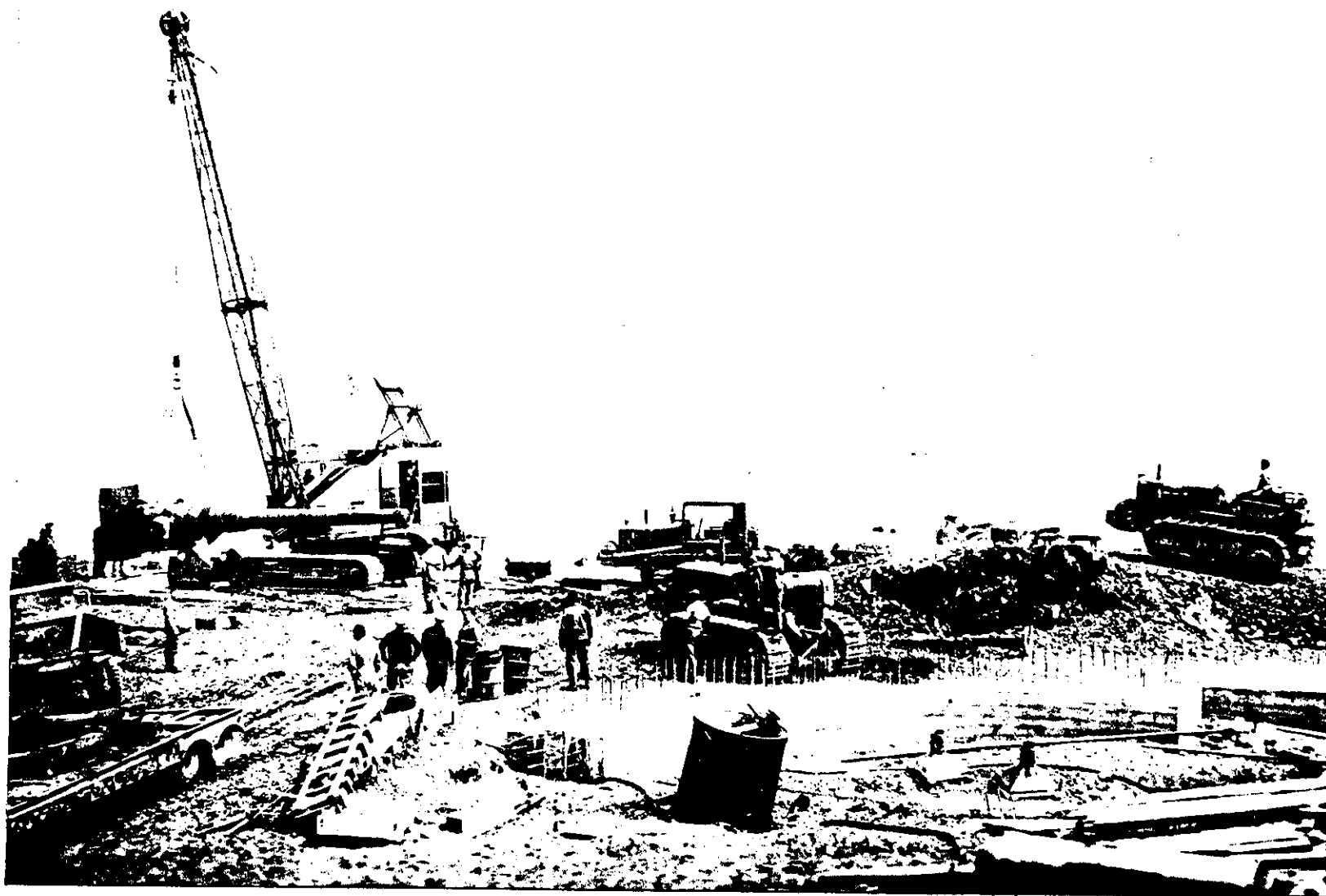
DRAFT

prepared by

Park Planning Section
Division of Parks
Alaska Department of Natural Resources



August 1983



Soldiers watch while an eight-inch gun is placed on its carriage at Miller Point in 1943.

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Photo Credits: Photos on pages 2, 18, and 30 are by Roma O. Saltzgiyer who was stationed at the Fort during World War II. All others are by the Alaska Division of Parks.

The spotting and plotting bunker served as the command center at the fort.



Summary

Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park offers an excellent opportunity to interpret Alaska's World War II history while also providing opportunities for local residents and visitors to Kodiak to enjoy the park's natural setting and varied recreational opportunities. This plan has been prepared to direct the park's management for these purposes in an economically efficient manner.

The plan relies, to a substantial degree, upon past planning efforts which were conducted by the Division of Parks in 1973 and 1979. It emphasizes the preservation and interpretation of the park's historic features and the story of World War II in Alaska. Additionally, a strong effort has been made to maintain existing recreational uses in the park. In many cases these existing uses will be enhanced through improved recreational facilities. To insure that the park's historic preservation and recreation use goals do not conflict, the lands within the park have been zoned to provide a clear management direction for specific portions of the park.

Historic preservation efforts will focus upon restoring several of the main bunkers, the spotting and plotting room, and a quonset hut.

The Miller Point Bunker. (Ready Reserve Magazine) is to become a World War II History Center, to be operated in cooperation with a local historical society. Another bunker near Lake Gertrude (War Reserve Magazine) is

being adapted for use as a park maintenance shop and storeroom. Exploded portions of the Miller Point guns are to be reassembled, if possible, since replacement guns are not available.

Historic interpretation efforts are being directed towards the development of a self-guided historical interpretive trail. This trail will interpret, through a brochure, most of the significant structures remaining in the fort. The foundations or remnants, of several structures are to be maintained in a state of arrested decay, since restoration funding is to be directed towards the two main bunkers, the spotting and plotting room, and reconstruction of a quonset hut.

Overnight camping, an often intensely debated issue, is proposed to continue but will be managed to simply provide overnight accommodations rather than to provide a camping experience in a natural setting. Ten hike-in campsites are to be built in the center of the park, while vehicle-oriented camping will be accommodated in the existing parking lot near the park entrance. Other recreational facilities to be developed include a new boat launching dock/fishing pier, numerous trails, a group picnic area, refurbished picnic sites near Lake Gertrude, a swimming beach, access trails to the park's ocean beaches, and an extensive trail system.

The plan also provides information on the physical and cultural resources of the park, park goals and policies, and a discussion of special management issues.

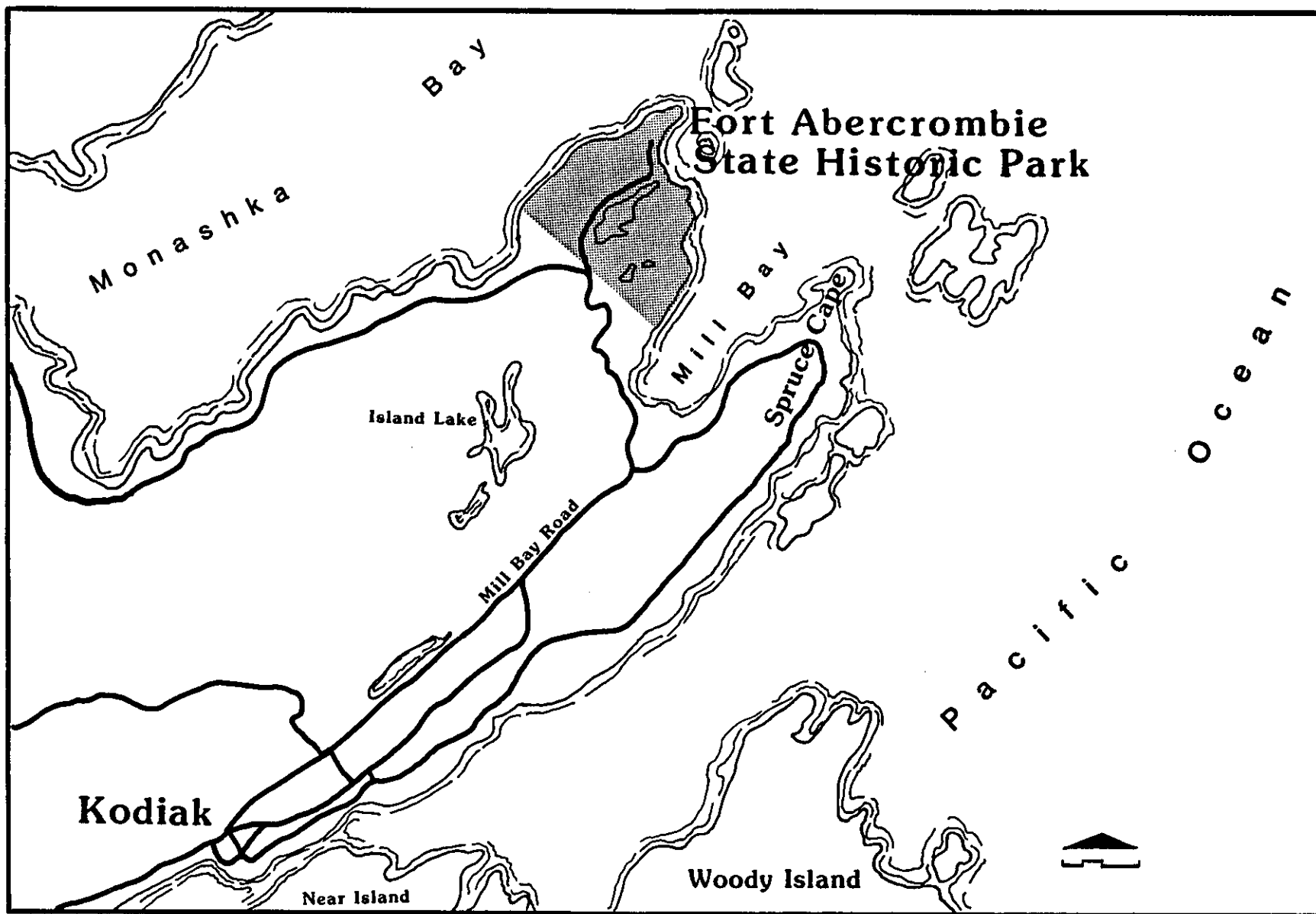


Figure 1: Location Map

1 Introduction

Purpose and Background: This plan has been prepared to establish a course of action for both the short- and long-term management of Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park. It is based, in part, on an existing master plan which was prepared in 1973 and on a park-wide site development plan which was prepared in 1979.

Few other units of the Alaska State Park System, which are comparable in size, possess the cultural and natural resources that are found in Fort Abercrombie. The historic ruins of a World War II coastal defense installation coupled with the steep surf-pounded cliffs, deep spruce forests, wildflower laden meadows, and a lake containing trout and grayling offer the public a unique opportunity to learn of the events of World War II while enjoying the natural beauty of the park.

Today, the park fulfills many needs. For local residents and visitors to Kodiak, it provides a place to hike, swim, boat, or fish. The Miller Point area is also important to local residents as a location from which to radio fishing boats at sea. Recently, local interest in the fort's historic features has developed. This interest is of both an academic and commercial nature. The residents of Kodiak have long been interested in the native and Russian history of the islands. As some 40 years have passed since the fort was constructed, and the individuals who manned it are now in their sixties, interest in World War II history and concern for its preservation has heightened. In addition, local tour operators have expressed a desire to include the park in their scheduled tours of Kodiak

Island. Both the Borough and city of Kodiak are looking towards tourism as a means of diversifying the island's economy.

Since the park's establishment as a unit of the Alaska State Park System in 1969, the park has had a history of vandalism and law enforcement problems. This situation had lead to high operations costs and frequent turnover of park staff. In 1979, the Division of Parks placed a full-time ranger at the park and recently built a ranger office and residence at the park entrance. A redesign of some of the park facilities, the installation of vehicle control gates and a vigorous enforcement of park regulations have resulted in greater enjoyment of the park by both local residents and visitors to Kodiak Island.

2 Physical and Cultural Resources

The reader is referred to the Fort Abercrombie State Historic Site Master Development Plan (Wyler et. al., 1973) for a discussion of the Kodiak area, and the physical and cultural character of the park and its environs. Relevant portions of this plan are included in Appendix I.

World War I naval gun arrives at the fort in 1943.



3 Purposes of the Park

The overall goals and policies for the management of units of the Alaska State Park System and, specifically, historic parks are discussed in Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework (Alaska Division of Parks, 1982). In summary, the dominant management objective of a historic park is to preserve and interpret historic resources. Developments which foster the preservation, protection and interpretation of the unit's cultural resource values are encouraged. Recreational activities which are compatible with the purposes of the unit may be allowed.

Policies which have been adopted by the Division of Parks in the Statewide Framework which are of particular relevance to Fort Abercrombie State Historic Park are listed below.

The Division of Parks shall

2.3 manage all units of the park system so that the natural qualities of each unit are not diminished;

2.5 manage all units of the park system to protect and maintain fish and wildlife populations;

3.3 investigate, stabilize, rehabilitate, restore, adaptively reuse, and/or preserve significant structures, sites or artifacts contained in units of the park system;

3.4 provide interpretive and visitor orientation programs and facilities at state historic parks and sites and at other units, as appropriate, to provide for an understanding and appreciation of historic and cultural resources;

4.3 incorporate scientific and educational values of park units into interpretive programs to assist the public in developing appreciation and understanding of the values for which the units were established;

5.1 support the state's tourism industry through the management of natural and cultural resource attractions, the protection of scenic areas and the provision of year-round outdoor recreational opportunities in units of the State Park System.

Additional policies applicable to Fort Abercrombie follow.

8.9 Construction materials used in State Park System units shall be appropriate to the natural and/or historical environment, and facility designs shall blend harmoniously with the natural or historic setting.

8.15 Areas possessing prehistoric or historic resources shall be developed for use only in accordance with appropriate and generally accepted historic preservation standards.

9.11 Law enforcement shall be provided as an integral part of visitor services. All permanent field rangers will be trained and commissioned as peace officers.

9.16 Where appropriate, encouragement will be given to assistance from other agencies, interest groups and private individuals in the management and operation of state park units.

9.18 Sensitive natural or cultural resource values found within park units will be protected by employing off-site interpretive techniques and on-site physical and behavioral management techniques.

9.19 Certain non-exclusive commercial use of park land is permissible when it does not interfere with park users or misrepresent resource or park unit values and when it is appropriate to the park unit land use zones. However, these activities shall be managed through a permit system, subject to applicable law.






Radar tower under construction.
Today only the footings remain.

View of Pacific Ocean from Piedmont Point.



Legend

-  Cultural Zone
-  Recreational Development Zone
-  Natural Zone

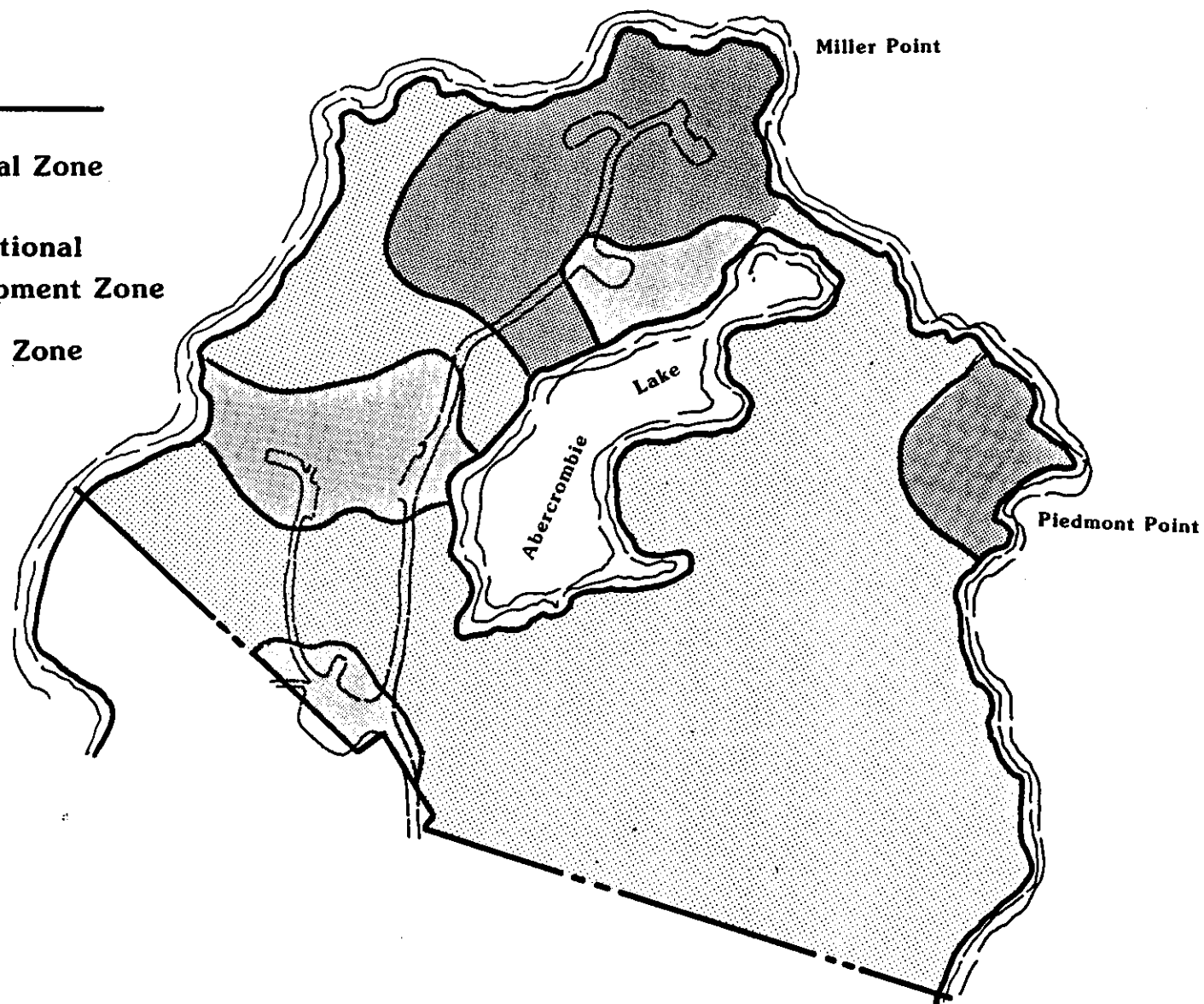


Figure 2: Land Use Zones

4 Land Use Zones

As a part of this plan, the lands within the park have been classified into land use zones to define their long-term management direction. Three zones have been applied to the lands within the park. They are the cultural, natural and recreational development zones. Detailed descriptions of purpose, characteristics and allowed developments and activities are provided in Alaska State Park System: Statewide Framework. This information is summarized below:

Cultural Resource Zone: This zone is used on lands which possess sites and/or artifacts of historical or archaeological interest. The preservation, interpretation and study of the sources is the dominant goal within this zone. Developments are associated with public access, safety and interpretation are allowed to the extent they do not interfere with the primary purpose of the zone.

Natural Zone: Natural Zones are used to provide for moderate to low impact and dispersed forms of recreation and to act as a backdrop or buffer to the cultural zones. Land within these zones are relatively undisturbed and undeveloped and are managed to maintain high scenic qualities and to provide

visitors with opportunities for significant, natural outdoor experiences. Landscape modifications may be allowed to protect, enhance, or maintain the natural setting according to the unit master plan. Developments within this zone are intended to provide for visitor safety and to provide a moderate level of convenience in a high quality natural setting.

Recreational Development Zone: This zone is established to meet more intensive recreational needs of the public. The landscape within this zone can be modified to enhance educational or recreational activities and/or to enhance wildlife habitat and scenic qualities. The highest level of development within a park unit is meant to occur in this zone.

The location of these zones within the park are shown in figure 2. Adherence to the policies for the management of these zones embodied in the Statewide Framework and this plan will help insure that the park provides the maximum level of public service in a manner which insures the long-term protection of its resources. Adherence to these policies will also help to insure the most efficient and effective investment of the state's financial resources in the park.

5 Special Issues

Camping in the Park: The question of whether or not to allow overnight camping in the park has been a longstanding issue. In the 1973 master plan, it was proposed that camping be deemphasized, although the plan did recommend the development of a new campground west of Miller Point. The plan also recommended that a new campground be developed outside of the park and suggested Pillar Bay (creek) as an appropriate location. During the preparation of the 1979 master site development plan, it was suggested that camping be eliminated as soon as either the state or borough could develop an alternative campground. Local residents were complaining that campers, particularly long-term ones, were preempting their full use and enjoyment of the park. At that time, short-term camping limits were established and vigorously enforced.

In 1982, the Division of Parks acquired, via a cooperative land management agreement a 41 acre parcel of land from the U.S. Coast Guard at Buskin Beach and developed on it an 18 unit campground.

This plan recommends that only convenience-oriented camping be allowed in the park. That is, camping which is not oriented toward providing a camping experience but simply provides a place for an overnight stay for persons visiting the park. This plan provides for vehicle-oriented camping in the large parking lot near the park office. Tent camping is provided for through the development of ten hike-in campsites to the north of the War Reserve Magazine. This compromise solution to the camping issue is thought to be one which will still allow people to camp

in the park but in a manner which neither conflicts with other day use activities nor with the primary mission of the park which is the interpretation of World War II history.

Steep Cliffs: Steep and dangerous cliffs are found throughout the park. Areas of intense public use and facility development require that pedestrian barriers be erected and maintained. Steel posts and chain have already been used in the park for this purpose and have worked well from both a maintenance and aesthetic standpoint. For more remote areas, such as Piedmont Point, simple warning signs are sufficient.

Horse Use: Horses are currently using the road (trail) to Piedmont Point. This use should be prohibited as it is incompatible with the maintenance of this trail and the use of this natural area by the general public.

Domestic Dogs: Domestic dogs are entering the park and harassing wildlife. Local residents should be notified that dogs running loose in the park are a violation of park regulations. This notification should also clearly state that loose dogs are subject to being trapped or destroyed by park personnel.

Lake Gertrude Fishery Management: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game should be encouraged to continue to stock Lake Gertrude with trout and grayling. The enhancement of rearing habitat for arctic grayling may be possible on some of the small streams feeding the lake. However, any effort in this regard shall be reviewed by both the Park Planning and History and

Archaeology Sections.

Land Acquisition: A single lot near the park entrance should be acquired by land exchange or purchase. The Kodiak Island Borough is the owner of this property. This lot is currently used for crab pot storage which is a non-conforming use according to borough zoning ordinances for this area. If the property is acquired, the existing gravel pad should be removed and the area revegetated.

Vegetation Management: Some limited and small scale manipulation of park vegetation to provide a variety of wildlife habitat could be allowed if compatible with other park values. However, any project of this type shall be reviewed by the Director's office and staff before being undertaken.

In the cultural resource zones, the cutting of vegetation to recreate the historic setting of the fort (circa 1943) shall be allowed. This treatment is particularly needed near the spotting bunkers and in the area between the eight inch guns on Miller Point.

Cooperative Management with Adjoining Land-owners: The present cooperative management agreement with the City of Kodiak for the Cry of the Wild Ram Site should be continued. Further, the amending of this agreement or the creation of a new management for the cooperative management of the Lions Club/Scout property to the south of the park should be investigated. It is logical to manage these three areas as a single recreational/cultural complex.

Residential Trespass: A portion of a private residence is suspected of being located within the park. Also, old cars, fishing boats, sheds, barrels and other items from several neighboring residences have been placed on park land.

A resurvey of the park boundary should be completed to determine if in fact the private residence is in trespass. If it is, a land exchange should be negotiated with the owner. A portion of the lot owned by the alleged trespasser contains the shoreline of a small lake of which the balance of the shoreline is in the park. This property would be desirable to acquire for the park.

Neighboring residents who are storing their property on park land should be formally notified that their properties are in trespass. At this time this use does not seem to be in conflict with the management of the park. Non-compatible use permits could be issued if appropriate, provided they contain a 30 or 60 day cancellation clause.

6 Park Development Recommendations

The recommendations for the development of the park have been organized by geographic areas which are shown in figure 3. Proposed developments within each area are discussed below. Priorities and phasing of developments are shown in the implementation chapter of this plan.

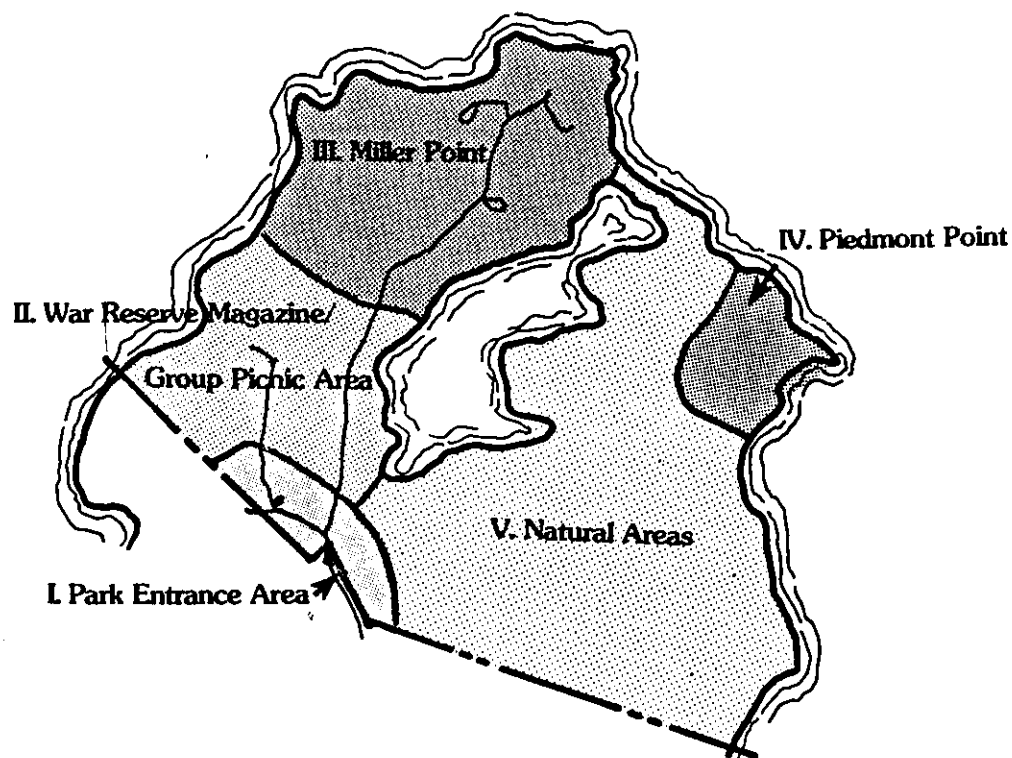


Figure 3: Park Management Units

- I. Park Entrance Area
 - A. Redevelop the park entrance intersection to more clearly identify directions to the park's features and facilities. A park information facility should also be located in this area.
 - B. Parking Lot
 1. Redevelop the entrance area parking lot to better define vehicular circulation, provide landscaped plantings and increase parking capacity by more clearly defining parking spaces.
 2. Construct a latrine and water source for overnight camping with recreational vehicles or pickup trucks with campers. Obtain the approval of the City of Kodiak and Baranof Productions, Inc., before implementation of this recommendation or 1 above.
 - C. Park Office/Ranger Residence
 1. Redesign and level the parking lot in front of the park office. Parking in this lot is to be limited to state park vehicles. Visitor parking will be accommodated in the large parking area across the road from the park office.
 2. Develop a foot trail from the park office to the Miller Point Road near Lake Gertrude. Provide lighting for the trail using buried power cables.

The trail is to be developed to a type I standard (see Appendix II).

- D. Construct a storage yard with a locking gate and wood fence to screen the yard from the road. This facility will be developed in what is presently an informal campsite off of the Cry of the Wild Ram site access road, just past the park office. This facility is to be used for the storage of vehicles, park furniture, and construction materials which do not need to be stored in a dry area. Dry storage will be provided in the War Reserve Magazine (see II below).
- E. Assess the need for and provide as necessary outdoor lighting in this area. Lighting should be designed to provide a dimly lit area for use by overnight campers (when outdoor lighting is needed in fall, winter and spring).

II. War Reserve Magazine/Group Picnic Area

A. War Reserve Magazine (interior)

1. Provide ventilation for the maintenance shop and storage rooms. Develop ventilated storage for paint and other flammables. Construct storage racks, shelves, bins and work benches. Investigate methods of dampening sound in the shop bay.

Mark emergency exit routes by painting clear lanes on the floor.

B. War Reserve Magazine (exterior)

1. Place fill material on bunker to recreate its appearance in 1943 and to provide insulation for interior heating of the bunker. Paint on a waterproof sealant before recovering. If the original vent fixture cannot be reused for present day utilities, new fixtures should be camouflaged by painting them flat black.
2. Provide a fold down barrier to prevent the public from parking/camping on the service road at the north end of the bunker.
3. Place large signs over the inside of the bunker doors which say "Do not leave work materials outside the bunker". Prohibiting the storage of materials outside of the bunker will allow park visitors to view the bunker almost as it was in 1943 while the bunker simultaneously serves as a present day maintenance shop.
4. Place large rocks around the latrine at the south end of the bunker to protect it from damage by errant vehicles.

C. Roadside Picnic Area

1. Redevelop the existing gravel fill pad with landscaped berms and other plantings to soften its present stark appearance. Two picnic sites with fireplaces or charcoal grills and tables should be maintained at this

site. Insure that the development and use of these sites does not compromise the outstandingly scenic view of Lake Gertrude which is seen by park visitors from the road as they enter the park.

2. Develop two or three additional picnic sites between the lake and roadway near the area described in 1 above.

- D. Reconstruct the existing boat launching platform to include the improvement of the access trail and ramped staircase.

Also, consult with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to determine the best location for a fishing platform. This fishing platform shall be handicapped accessible and usable. The trail from the roadside parking/picnic area is to be a type I (see Appendix II) with less than 8% grade and must be surfaced in a manner which is usable by persons in wheelchairs. It may be possible to have the fishing platform and boat launching platform be the same facility. If this is the case, the platform should be designed in such a manner as to insure the two uses do not conflict. A railing should be installed along the fishing portion of the platform to prevent boat launching and prevent wheelchairs from rolling into the water.

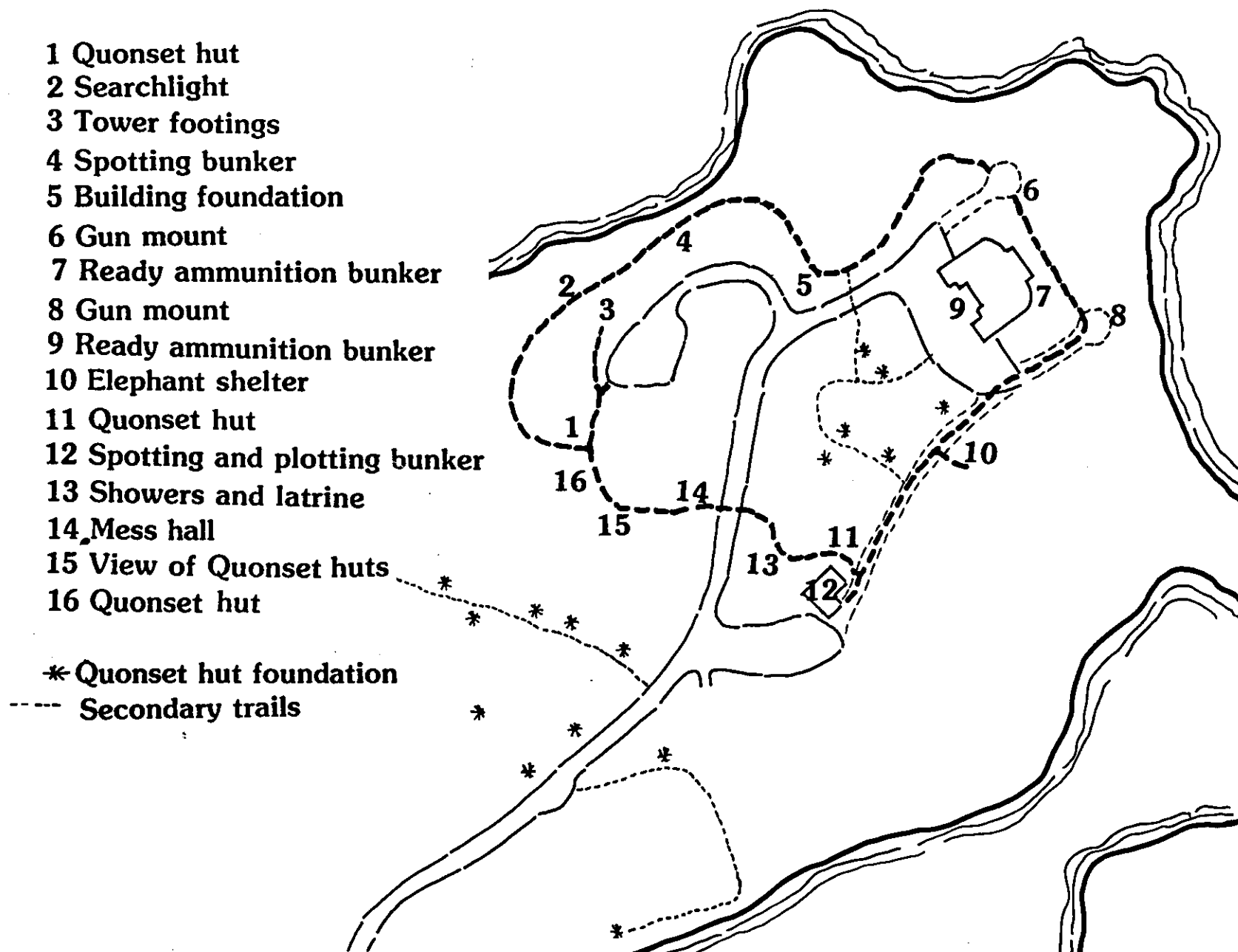
E. Group Picnic Area

1. Complete the development of the group picnic area as proposed in the 1983 site development plan for this area.
2. Construct an access trail to the beach from the group picnic area. This trail will require the installation of a XX foot bridge across a portion of route which has sloughed to the beach.

F. Hike-in Campsites

1. Develop 10 hike-in tent camping sites with picnic tables and fire pits. Access to these campsites will be via the trail from the water pump (near the War Reserve Magazine) and the group picnic area. Place two pit latrines at the end of the old quonset hut foundation near the Miller Point Road. Do not disturb the foundation. Servicing of these latrines will be by vehicle from the Miller Point Road. Infrequent service vehicle traffic should not result in any deterioration of the old concrete foundation. A fold-down barrier is to be installed to prevent other vehicles from entering this area.
2. Replace pit latrines with a sealed vault latrine as soon as funding is available.

Figure 4: Historical Interpretive Trail



III. Miller Point

A. Miller Point Historic Area

1. Ready Ammunition Bunker

- a. Provide new doors for the bunker.
- b. Recover the entire bunker with fill material except for a portion of the northeast wall. The exposed portion will be used to illustrate the construction of the bunker to the public. The concrete shall be coated with a waterproofing sealant prior to covering. Also, utility corridors into the bunker shall be provided for the future adaptive reuse of the bunker as a World War II History Center.

2. Develop the bunker as a World War II History Center with heat, light, and ventilation. Special climate controls will be necessary for the storage and display of artifacts. A portion of the bunker should be dedicated to use for interpreting World War II at Fort Abercrombie, on Kodiak Island, and the Aleutian Chain. The remaining area within the bunker should be used as offices for researchers and for storage of artifacts.

A cooperative agreement should

be worked out between the Division of Parks and the local historical society for the daily operation of the center.

Outdoor displays should be provided in addition to the historical interpretive trail discussed below for use by the public when the center is not open. An entrance fee could be charged to help defray basic operating costs of the center. The state should pay the costs of the adaptive reuse construction and subsidize utility costs to the extent necessary.

3. Collect and display portions of the guns which were exploded by the Defense Department. If appropriate, the guns could be partially reassembled (in a manner similar to the way dinosaurs are reconstructed) for public display. At a minimum, a display should be located near the gun barrels showing photographs of their installation and use at the fort and their specifications.

4. Construct a historical interpretive trail throughout the ruins of Fort Abercrombie at Miller Point. This trail will be a Type I (see Appendix II) standard and self-guided, using posts with symbols at each observation station and a

brochure with text, sketches and photographs. The trail will be accessible at three locations: the existing campground parking lot, Miller Point, and at the North Lake picnic area parking lot. A box for visitors to pickup and return brochures will be located at each entry point. The brochure should contain an overall map of the trail with observation stations and entry points noted. The trail can be developed initially as a type II but should be upgraded to a type I as soon as possible. Portion of the trail will be handicapped accessible. However, steep grades in several locations will prevent full handicapped use.

5. Remove camping from the existing campground and redevelop this area for day use parking only. This parking will serve visitors to Miller Point and the historical interpretive trail. The redesign of the parking lot should be in a manner similar to that proposed in the 1979 master site development plan except the portion of the lot which is proposed to cover the foundation of a quonset hut should be eliminated. A sitting area, or informal picnic site, should be located near the trailhead at this location.

6. Develop a type II trail along the Miller Point cliffs and provide displays to interpret the natural and cultural history of the area. Post and chain fencing will need to be installed along much of this trail to protect visitors from the hazardous cliffs.

7. Fully restore the spotting and plotting bunker (war room) including the reinstallation of electrical service. Using mannequins and World War II artifacts, recreate a scene of the war room in use during the sighting of an unidentified vessel offshore.

8. Acquire and reconstruct a quonset hut several hundred feet northwest of the Spotting and Plotting Room. Furnish the hut as troop quarters with mannequins. Several viewing windows should be provided. Electrical service will be necessary for lighting and limited heating to control humidity.

B. North Lake Picnic Area

1. Redevelop the existing parking area with logs to better define parking spaces and to organize vehicle circulation. Place topsoil and seed on gravel surfaces not needed for parking or walking. Place a large earth mound next to the Spotting and Plotting Bunker and plant spruce trees and native groundcovers on it. The

purpose of this mound is to provide a visual screen between the parking lot and bunker which visitors will be touring as a stop on the interpretive trail.

2. Construct a vault latrine approximately 25 feet east of the parking lot. At this location the latrine will be visible from the swimming beach and picnic area which is located downhill and from the parking lot. Also, place a dumpster pad and screen on the parking lot or near this latrine. Develop a service road from the parking lot to the latrine.
3. Develop a ramped staircase and trail to the picnic area near the lake. See the 1979 site plan for a diagram of a ramped staircase. This staircase should be located directly downhill from the parking lot. Also, develop a type I trail to the lakeshore for use by handicapped persons and to provide access by an all-terrain vehicle (three-wheel) for picking up garbage and general site maintenance. Eliminate all other trails in this area by aerating the soil and reestablishing the duff layer with duff gathered from outside of the park.
4. Picnic Area
 - a. Border all trails and

picnic sites in this area with logs. Construct type I and type II trails. Aerate soil around tree roots and add four to six inches of new duff material or treated wood chips.

- b. Construct a platform or viewing area on top of the knob located in this area. The approximate size 10'x15' and is shown in the 1979 site plan drawings.
- c. Place ten picnic sites with fire pits within this area.
- d. Place gravel in the lake for the development of a swimming area near the picnic area.
- e. Maintain the existing beach picnic sites.

IV. Piedmont Point Historic Area

Maintain the historic structures in the Piedmont Point areas in a state of arrested decay. The management goal for this area is to maintain the abandoned or "ghost fort" atmosphere that currently exists. Interpretation of the structures and ruins should be limited to brochures carried by the park visitor. The trail leading to Piedmont Point from Miller Point should be of a type III design which maintains the sense of exploration or discovery which the park visitor currently feels as they approach the point looking for the historic ruins. The ramped staircase leading up to the point should be reconstructed. How-

ever, no picnic sites or other recreational facilities are to be located within this zone. The trail leading to the point should be rerouted in areas where the bluff is eroding out from under the trail.

V. Natural Areas

- A. Develop a trail system through the natural areas to the types and standards shown on the trail plan.
- B. Resting areas with benches should be provided at various locations along these trails. Rustic viewing platforms may also be appropriate in certain areas such as the old beaver dam, Lake Gertrude, or other points of interest.
- C. No alteration of the natural vegetation within this zone is to be allowed for purposes other than trail clearing, maintenance or wildlife habitat enhancement projects. Dead falls which are located away from trails may be used as a source of logs only if absolutely necessary. All habitat enhancement projects must have the Director's approval.

View from the ruins
of a searchlight bunker.



7 Implementation

Site Planning and Plan Modification

Prior to the construction of facilities proposed in this plan, site planning will occur. The site planning process can serve as an opportunity to review and update, if necessary, the recommendations of this plan.

During the site planning process, a detailed site analysis will be performed which may suggest minor revisions of the numbers and locations of the facilities recommended in this plan. Because the site planning process includes input from the various sections within the Division as well as the Kodiak State Park Advisory Board and the general public, minor adjustments can be made at that time with the benefit of the perspectives of these entities. If a major departure from the intent of the management plan is suggested, the Director shall consider the need for public review and comment.

Phasing

The recommendations contained in this plan have been prioritized by phasing their implementation. Within each phase, individual projects have been a numerical priority over other projects within the same phase. As funding becomes available for the implementation of this plan projects within Phase A shall be completed before those under Phase B are initiated. An exception to this requirement would occur when the mobilization of construction staff and equipment on one project might make it wise to complete a

similar project nearby to avoid future remobilization costs. To the extent possible, this situation has been considered and dealt with in the following phasing scheme. For ease of reference, this information has been arranged in a tabular format. For descriptions of the work involved in each proposed facility, the reader is referred to the recommendation chapter of this plan.

Recommendations for the management of lands within the park which do not involve the development of new facilities should be implemented as soon as possible.

Soldiers off duty at the fort in 1943.



PHASE A

<u>#</u>	<u>Facility</u>	<u>Park Subarea</u>	<u>Rec. Number</u>
1	Shop Improvements	War Reserve Mag/ Group Picnic Area	II-A-1 & II-B-3
2	Latrine Barriers	War Reserve Mag/ Group Picnic Area	II-B-4
3	Fold-Down Barrier	War Reserve Mag/ Group Picnic Area	II-B-2
4	Group Picnic Area	War Reserve Mag/ Group Picnic Area	II-E-1
5	Beach Access Trail	War Reserve Mag/ Group Picnic Area	II-E-2
6	Hike-in Campsites	War Reserve Mag/ Group Picnic Area	II-F-1
7	Latrine & Water	Park Entrance	I-B-2
8	Miller Point/ Park Entrance	Camping Relocation/ Parking Lot Rehab	III-A-5
9	Historical Interpre- tive Trail	Miller Point	III-A-4

10	Storage Yard	Park Entrance	I-D
11	Trail to Office	Park Entrance	I-C-2
PHASE B			
<u>#</u>	<u>Facility</u>	<u>Park Subarea</u>	<u>Rec. Number</u>
1	Bunker Doors	Miller Point	III-A-1-a
2	Recover Bunkers	Miller Point/ War Reserve	III-A-1-b and II-B-1
3	Gun Display	Miller Point	III-A-3
4	Entrance Rehab	Park Entrance	I-A
5	Roadside Picnic Area Rehab	War Reserve	II-C-1
6	Boat Launch/ Fish Pier	War Reserve	II-D
7	Lake Picnic	Miller Point	III-B-1
8	Latrine	Miller Point	III-B-2
9	Staircase/Trail	Miller Point	III-B-3
10	Soil Compaction Control	Miller Point	III-B-4-a

11	Picnic Sites	Miller Point	III-B-4-c
12	Viewing Area	Miller Point	III-B-4-b
13	Gravel Beach	Miller Point	III-B-4-d

PHASE C

<u>#</u>	<u>Facility</u>	<u>Park Subarea</u>	<u>Rec. Number</u>
1	Parking Rehab	Park Entrance	I-B-1
2	Outdoor Lighting	Park Entrance	I-E
3	Latrine	War Reserve	II-F-2
4	Trail/Interp.	Miller Point	III-A-6
5	Trail System	Natural Area	V-A
6	History Center	Miller Point	III-A-2
7	Park Office Parking Rehab	Park Entrance	I-C-1
8	Spotting & Plotting Room Recon.	Miller Point	III-A-7
9	Quonset Hut Reconstruction	Miller Point	III-A-8

Appendices

I. Trail Plan and Standards

The trail plan for the park is shown on the map in this appendix. Some of the trails have been discussed in both the recommendations and implementation sections of this plan. Those trails which have not been discussed should be developed as staff and equipment are available.

Hiking through the park's natural areas.



The following trail development and maintenance standards are to be used within the park:

Type I (high standard): These trails are six feet wide with an improved walking surface (paved, gravel, wood chip, or wooden boardwalk). Grades are not steeper than 8%. This type of trail is designed for use by all types of park visitors, including the handicapped and elderly. Generally, this type of trail will be used only in the recreation development or cultural zone.

Type II (moderate standard): This type of trail is three to four feet wide with an improved walking surface (gravel, wood chips, or wooden boardwalk) in areas with poor drainage, or soft soil conditions. In areas with steep grades, steps or cleated ramps may be used. This type of trail is designed for use by most park visitors, including the moderately handicapped. These trails have moderate slopes (not more than 15%) and are normally found in recreation development and natural zones of the park.

Type III (low standard): These trails have a two foot wide tread with limited sections of gravel, wood chips or boardwalk in areas with drainage problems or poor soil conditions. These trails may possess steep grades (12% to 25%), however, switchbacks are normally used on steeper grades to prevent erosion. These trails are designed for park users in average or above average physical condition. The purpose of these trails is to maintain a rustic or natural appearance to the area traversed by the trail.

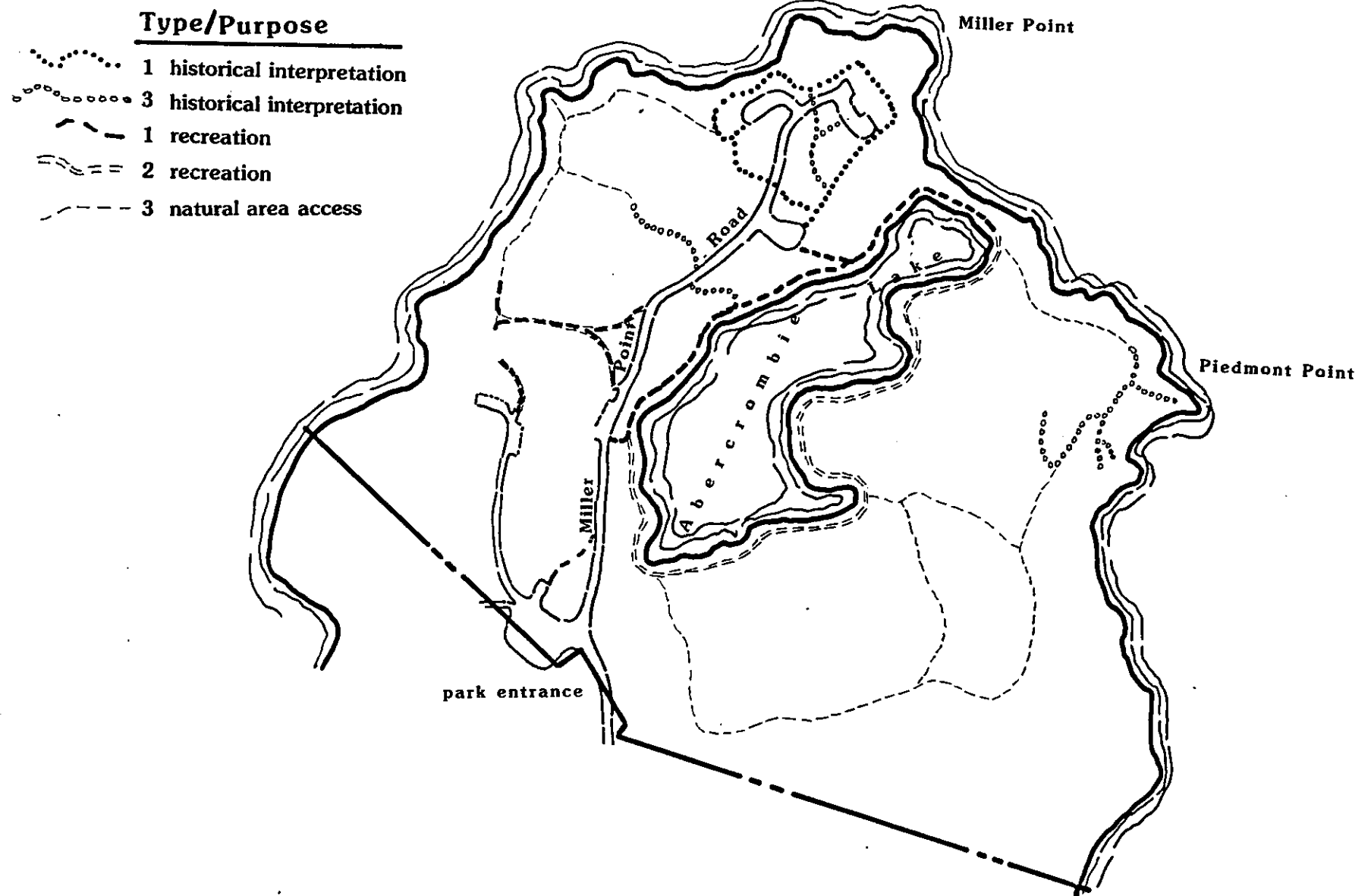


Figure 5: Trail Plan

II. Physical and Cultural Resource Information

Description of the Area

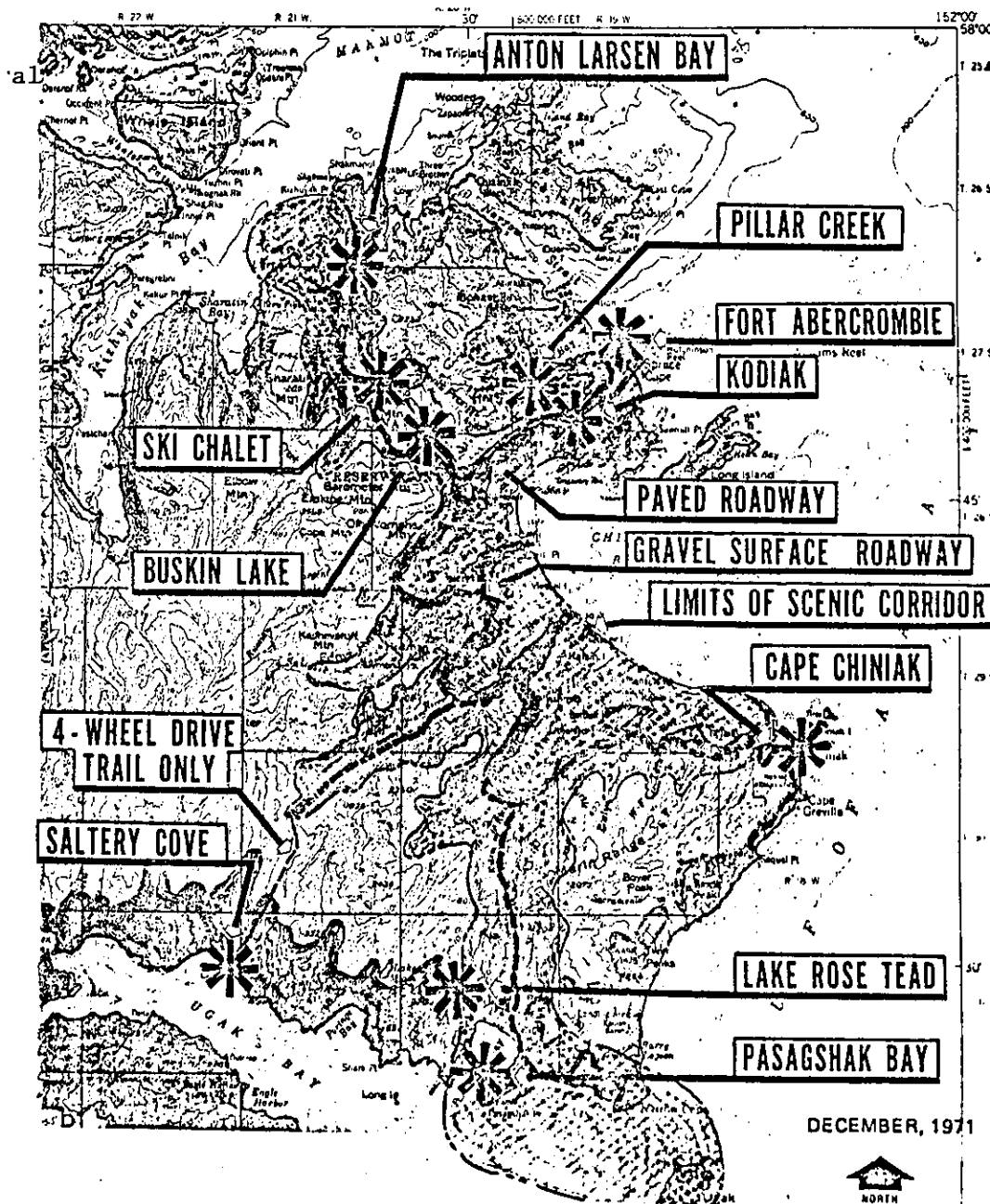
The Fort Abercrombie Historic Site must be described in terms of both its physical and historic character. Its physical beauty is unparalleled. Its historical character is unique and irreplaceable.

Physical Character

The Fort Abercrombie Historic Site is located on Kodiak Island in the South Central Region of Alaska. A World War II military installation, Fort Abercrombie is approximately three miles north-east of Kodiak. The 183-acre site is part of the State Park system and contains the ruins of the Fort Abercrombie installation. The location of the historic site is illustrated on the Fort Abercrombie Historic Site Regional Location Map and on the Fort Abercrombie Historic Site Specific Location Map.

The South Central Region is one of the most developed areas in Alaska for recreation. The region is filled with archaeological and historical evidence of past cultures, and the geology enthusiast will be interested in the unusual geologic characteristics of the island.

Kodiak's major industry of fishing provides another element of strong attraction for visitors. Kodiak waters are rich in numerous species of fish, and the King crab has become an important catch for Kodiak fishermen.



Physiography

The topography of Kodiak Island is rugged with maximum relief exceeding 2,000 feet in most areas. A central axially - trending mass of intrusive rock forms a mountain spine which sometimes reaches elevations of more than 4,000 feet. During the glacial period, the island was the center of vigorous ice action. From its higher mountains, glaciers pushed out to sea in all directions covering almost all of the land. The severe glacial erosion of this period produced the glacial valleys and fiorded coastlines which characterize the present topography of the Island.

The major topographical elements surrounding Fort Abercrombie Historic Site include Mount Herman on Spruce Island directly north, Monashka Mountain to the northwest, the Three Sisters mountain peaks directly west, and Woody Island and Long Island to the southeast. The Fort Abercrombie site itself contains Miller Point, Piedmont Point and Lake Gertrude. Other important topographical features of the site include the majestic cliffs and shoreline surrounding Monashka Bay on the northwest and Mill Bay on the southeast. The park site is located on a graywacke rock deposit. The soil profile of the area shows distinctly the layer of volcanic ash from the 1912 eruption of Mount Katmai.

Climate

The warm Japanese Current plays a prominent role in producing the mild winters and moist, cool summers which characterize the climate of Kodiak Island. In general, the temperatures on the Island are far more stable and more mild than those in most areas of comparable latitudes. The average temperature during the warmest month, August, is 55 degrees, and during the coldest month, December, approximately 30 degrees. Periodically during the winter, masses of very cold arctic air may move in from the north or northwest. However,

these periods of very low temperatures are brief because of the maritime influence.

The annual average precipitation for the area is 60.54 inches with average monthly precipitation ranging from approximately four to seven inches. During the fall, intensive storms occurring in the Gulf of Alaska sometimes bring prolonged and heavy rain to Kodiak Island. There are frequent winter storms, but they are generally accompanied by less precipitation.

Vegetation

Vegetation on Kodiak Island is quite varied with nearly all of the area covered with some form of grasses, shrubs or trees. On the northeast end of Kodiak Island, especially in the vicinity of Spruce Cape and Cape Chiniak, dense forests of mature Sitka Spruce occur. Large portions of the Fort Abercrombie site are covered by the dense Sitka Spruce forests which are common to its immediate area. The low protected valleys of central and eastern Kodiak Island contain cottonwood, birch and elder. Areas of central Kodiak Island which are exposed to winds, as well as most of the western part of Kodiak Island are treeless. Most treeless areas support a thick cover of grass, although some low brush and tundra vegetation such as mosses and lichens, prevail in localized areas. The variation of vegetation on the Island is quite spectacular and provides an unusually attractive array of color, patterns and textures.

The extensive plant growth found on the Fort Abercrombie Historic Site creates dense shade and does not allow the sun to dry the area. This semi-rain forest atmosphere is prevalent throughout the site, maintaining a level of high humidity which is not conducive to long-term camping.

The area is quite picturesque with climax spruce forest and all of the bird life (varied thrush, pine grosbeak, etc.) and plant life (salmon berry, blue

berry, devils club, etc.) generally associated with this type of area. On the perimeter of the spruce forest there are grasses (primarily red top), flowers (lupine, squaw lily, shooting star and wild geranium), and various shrubs.

Wildlife

The Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, which covers approximately 1,815,000 acres or 82 percent of the Kodiak Island land mass, is one of the last strongholds of the famous Kodiak brown bear. Most bears are found in the southern and western parts of the Wildlife Refuge, although some are found in the eastern part of the Island, principally near Cape Chiniak and Saltery Cove. The bears feed primarily on grass and roots in the spring, salmon and other fish in the summer, and berries in the fall. Bears in eastern Kodiak Island reportedly constitute a substantial danger to the livestock herds ranging within that area. Most bear hunting for sport is conducted in the southwestern part of the Island.

Other animal life on the Island include the Sitka black-tailed deer which are now common throughout the eastern end. Reindeer are also found in the extreme western area. Originally domesticated, they are now wild and are hunted for meat by residents. Occasionally, goats are seen in the mountainous areas, and elk are abundant on Afognak and Raspberry Islands. Smaller animals found throughout the area include fox, rabbit, muskrat, squirrel and beaver. Seal and sea lion rookeries are found in the Kodiak Island group, and sea otter are seen frequently. Fish which are found in most streams include steelhead, Dolly Varden and rainbow trout, and pink, silver and sockeye salmon in season.

Birdlife is interesting and varied. In addition to bald eagles and the usual gulls and marine birds, several species of ducks, including the beautiful harlequin and stellers eider, may be seen during

certain seasons. Common ravens, magpies, north-western crows, thrushes, finches and sparrows may also be encountered in appropriate habitat areas.

Transportation

The physical character of Kodiak Island and the park site strongly influence the availability of transportation to and within the area. Air, water and land transportation are all important modes, with air transportation perhaps being the most significant mode throughout the year.

Air transportation is now provided to the City of Kodiak by commercial airline and by chartered aircraft. Scheduled commercial flights provide service between Anchorage and Kodiak and between Seattle and Kodiak. These flights utilize the Kodiak Airport located five miles outside the City of Kodiak. Scheduled amphibious air service is also available between Kodiak and other outlying communities within the Kodiak Island Borough.

Kodiak is served by the State Ferry Tustumena which has a capacity of approximately 200 passengers and 54 vehicles. The Tustumena serves Kodiak twice weekly from the ports of Seward and Homer. With favorable weather conditions, the trip to Kodiak averages 13 hours from Seward and 10 hours from Homer. During the summer, ferry service is also available from the City of Anchorage. Freight and barge service from Seattle and Anchorage are also available and play an important role in the local economy by transporting local fish products to outside markets. Outlying communities are served from Kodiak primarily by private fishing boats, and commercial barge service has operated between Kodiak and some of the outlying areas on an unscheduled basis.

The road system within Kodiak Island is very limited. The majority of the roads are unpaved

except some of the principal streets within the City of Kodiak and most of the principal roads on the Naval Station. Present roads from Kodiak to Pillar Creek and from Kodiak to Cape Chiniak are well-graded, two-lane and gravelled. These are the basic main highways on the Island. However, additional single-lane country roads can take potential visitors to some of the unusually scenic areas. These roads generally serve the Anton Larsen Bay and the Pasagshak areas.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Fort Abercrombie Historic Site, and the adjacent area, has numerous features of significance both historically and archaeologically. Neither group of features should be overlooked in development of the park for future generations.

Archaeological Values - Kodiak Island is in what is called the Pacific Eskimo area. Archaeologists have long looked for signs that the Island was a stepping-stone from the old world to the new. Comparatively recent investigations suggest, however, that it 'has been a distinctive and separate cultural province throughout its history' (Clark, 1966). Five phases-- Ocean Bay I, Ocean Bay II, Old Kiavak, Three Saints and Koniag--have been defined in the Island's prehistory. Some archaeological remains from the latest of these cultures have been found near Fort Abercrombie, but there is little evidence that prehistoric or historic aborigines ever occupied the site.

Historical Values - In 1784 the Russians established their first permanent settlement in America at Three Saints Bay, only 100 miles southeast. In 1792 the headquarters of the Russian American Company was moved to St. Paul which is now called Kodiak Harbor, only a few miles from the site. By 1852, the area had been identified on Russian charts as 'Mys Melnichnoy,' or Mill Cape because of a Russian flour mill at the head of the bay to the southwest. Before this, the point also

had been labeled Popof Cape, perhaps in honor of Vasili and Ivan Popof, pioneer fur traders and hunters in Alaska in 1762-63. After the 1867 transfer of Alaska from Russian to American administration, Miller Point seems to have been translated from the Russian and continued as a designation for the area.

In June, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an Executive Order which withdrew 780 acres of private and public land in the vicinity of Miller Point for a military reservation. Battery C of the 250th Coast Artillery Regiment, a California National Guard unit mobilized in September, 1940, had moved in April, 1941, to Kodiak, bringing its three 155 mm. guns on the U. S. Army transport, St. Mihiel. The rest of the regiment remained in training in Camp McQuaide, California, but by summer's end had followed Battery C north. By the end of October, the 250th had established headquarters at Fort Greely, and emplaced its guns at Spruce Cape, Woody Island and Buskin Beach. Before November 11, 1941, when the command was alerted because of an unidentified ship off Kodiak, an observation post had been placed at Miller Point. Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, manned this post with six observers who communicated with Battalion Command Post via a Spruce Cape telephone relay. After December 7, when reports were received of Japanese attacks at Pearl Harbor and Wake Island, the post was manned around the clock.

During the weeks after Pearl Harbor, all of the regiment's batteries did daily battery practice. The 250th's mission, as noted in a Diary, (1940-41), was 'to defend the Naval Air Station, Kodiak, by denying entrance to hostile sea forces...'

Gun emplacements at Miller Point seem to have been low on the list of defense priorities. Not until May, 1942, did Navy contractors begin a survey of the area for suitable gun mount positions. Apparently, the observation post continued to be

manned, with its observers returning to Fort Greely for quarters and rations.

A contemporary account of garrison duty on Kodiak during this period indicates that life was relatively pleasant, with troops taking advantage of hunting and fishing opportunities. After Pearl Harbor, however, residents 'Hourly...expected Jap invasion.' Civilian dependents were evacuated December 17, and the atmosphere was kept tense by reports such as that on May 5, 1942, of aircraft detected 125-140 miles south.

Following Japanese attacks on Attu, Kiska and Unalaska in the western Aleutians, detailed plans were written for installation of two 8-inch guns at Miller Point. The plans provided for observation posts on Kizhuyak Point to the northwest and Mount Herman on Spruce Island, to complement the gun emplacement, and a satellite radar unit to be established at Piedmont Point just southwest of Miller Point. They also provided for two 60-inch mobile seacoast searchlights with power plants, to be placed in the Miller Point area and lights at Kizhuyak Point and Mount Herman.

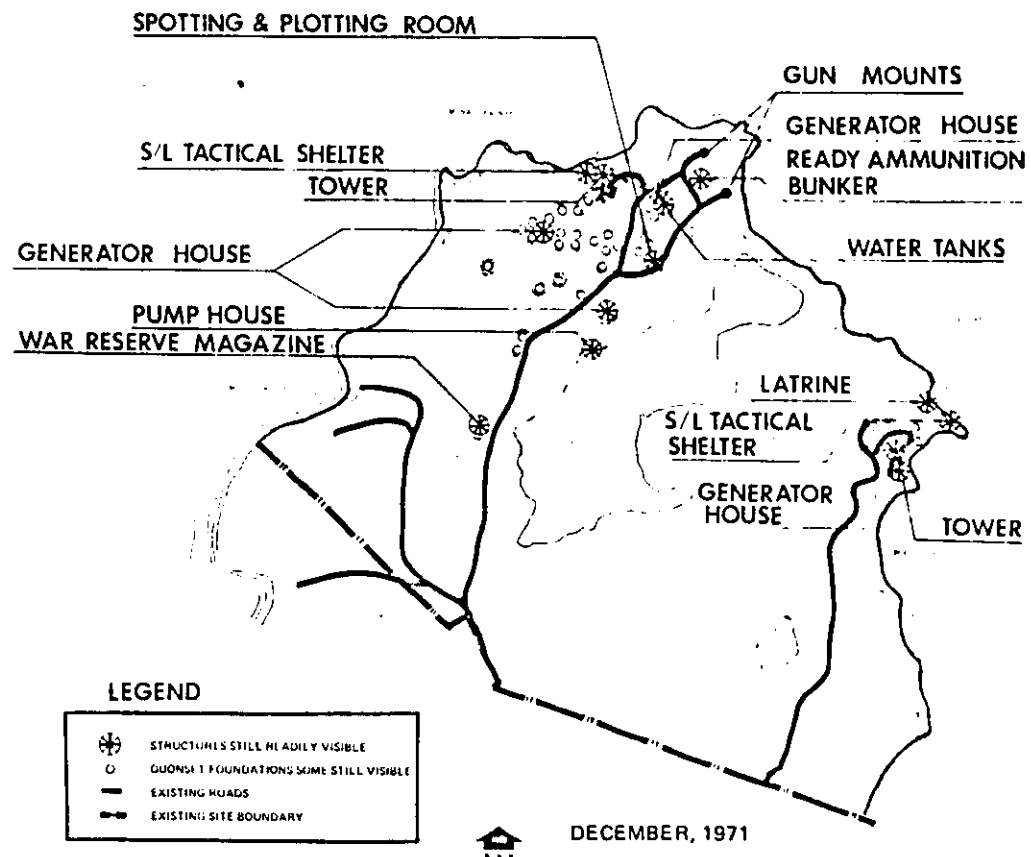
Available records of what happened at Miller Point after approval of fortification plans are sketchy. A War Department General Order on April 2, 1943, designated the site Fort Abercrombie, in honor of Lt. Col. William R. Abercrombie. As a company grade officer, Abercrombie played a major role in U. S. Army explorations in Alaska during the late 19th century. In May, 1944, the 250th Coast Artillery Regiment was broken up, converted, reorganized and redesignated. Events between May, 1944 and the end of the war remain obscure. Like Fort Abercrombie's importance as a military post, the records exist but have not yet been delineated.

Because the history of Fort Abercrombie is so obscure its material remains assume an importance not usually assigned to such recent three-dimensional records. The techniques of historical

archaeology seldom are applied to quasi-contemporary problems, yet in this instance they have been the only alternative.

Field survey during the spring of 1971 cataloged the location and traced each of the structures

shown on an 'as-constructed' plot of 1943. Followup research has identified the function of each structure. Analysis of existing remains and the 1943 as-constructed drawings indicates that two major components constituted Fort Abercrombie. These were Miller Point and Piedmont Point.



FORT ABERCROMBIE HISTORIC SITE

Specific Historic Structures-Map

Miller Point apparently was divided into three zones: operations, personnel support and logistical support. In the first zone, the two 8-inch guns (probably painted olive drab) on barbette carriages and the emplacement magazine were the most impressive structures. An unidentified structure just to the south of the emplacement magazine may have been a storage area for battle allowance ammunition. To the west, the battery commander's station shared a 50-foot wooden tower with a battery observation post. Less than 100 yards due west of this tower, a searchlight was housed in a concrete shelter. Double doors allowed the 60-inch light to pass easily from the shelter when it was run out on grooved tracks. Downslope to the northeast, at the 230-foot contour level, a small concrete bunker designated 'Distant Electrical Constr. (D.E.C.)' on some plans, and 'Harbor Observation Post' on others, may have served as a lookout point and an automatic weapons emplacement. A surviving inventory shows that an automatic 40 mm. cannon, two .30 caliber and two .50 caliber machine guns were in the Fort Abercrombie armory.

Warehouse and storage buildings seem to have been concentrated at the southern end of the garrison. The war reserve magazine was at the outermost point.

Personnel support facilities lay between the operations and supply zones, and were the most numerous. Evidence of 25 Quonset huts or squad tents used as quarters, a mess hall, infirmary, recreation hall, and two buildings containing latrines and showers indicate that at some point after 1942, troops manning the site moved from Fort Greely to Fort Abercrombie. The spotting and plotting room, a generator house, and an 'elephant shelter' housing an automatic weapons magazine, were also in this area. Another building, identified as 'barracks' on the 1943 plot, is much smaller than other quarters and may have been used by personnel on duty at the adjacent battery commander's station.

Piedmont Point, 1,300 yards southeast of the 8-inch gun positions, housed another tactical searchlight, a second 'D.E.C.' or observation post, a radar outstation, and ancillary personnel facilities.

Many of the structures in these areas remain. Among the more significant in the Miller Point area are the shelter for the searchlight, the emplacement magazine and the 8-inch batteries. These batteries were blown up in the late 1940's and the barrels are over a cliff at some distance from the shattered mounts. Only foundations of the battery commander's station survive, although the 'D.E.C.' is substantially intact. In the personnel support zone, the plotting and spotting room is the only significant structure intact, while the war reserve magazine survives from the warehouse and storage area.

At Piedmont Point the 'D.E.C.' and shelter for a searchlight are readily identifiable. There are also signs of the radar tower on this site.

A review of all the available evidence shows that Fort Abercrombie probably was actively manned between the summer of 1942 and spring of 1944. At its peak, military activity at the installation may have required between 150 and 200 men. They fulfilled the mission of denying Narrow Strait and Kizhuyak Bay to hostile sea forces with their two artillery pieces, each with a range of 33,000 yards, and their pair of searchlights.

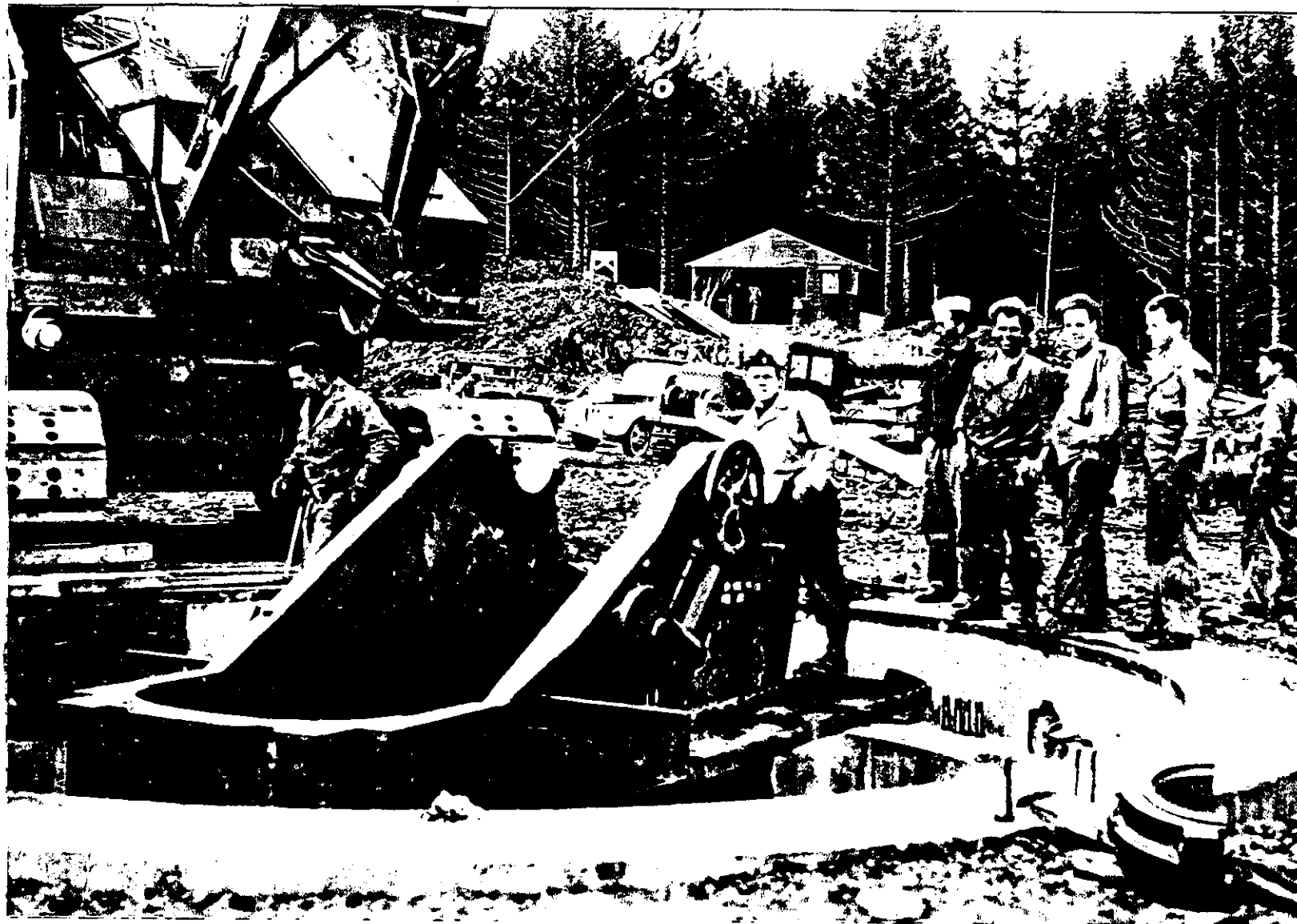
The question of Fort Abercrombie's historical importance remains and must be considered unanswerable. Samuel Eliot Morison may state that 'None of the operations (in the Aleutians) accomplished anything of great importance or had any appreciable effect on the outcome of the war,' (1964), but by however informed a person, this is only speculation. What might have happened had Fort Abercrombie and its counterparts not been created remains unknown. It is true that, in any imaginable scheme of things, the Miller Point post would have remained a small cog in a larger defense

machine. But since the key to U. S. strategy in the Aleutians has been defined as to deny island air and naval stations to the enemy (Conn, 1964), it seems proper to cite Fort Abercrombie as a good record of that idea.

View from Miller Point



Soldiers placing eight-inch gun at Miller Point.



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